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A New Book of Poems

BY

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ERIE, PENNSYLVANIA



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PREFACE.

This new book of poetry has been growing for many years. The Author began to write in a poetical way when about 13 years old. The first poem of some length that came from his hand, was about that beautiful body of fresh water called Lake Erie, that lies between our Country of Liberty and Law and Patriotism, and the British Colony of Canada opposite. The poem was put in print by an Erie newspaper. It was taken up a few years later and published in a book edited by a young gentleman, Mr. Judson, of Waterford, Penna. Afterwards the poetical impulse came upon the present author when a student in College, in 1847. That production appeared in print in a newspaper of the college town. The editor expressed his approval by saying that he would gladly accept for the columns of his paper any further contributions from "the diamond pen" of the same writer.

A number of other poetical pieces were written by the author of the present book, and printed in newspapers. But in 1862, the author had a volume published by Carleton, of New York City, bearing the title of "Home and Other Poems". The first intention was to have "Home" republished in the new book that is soon to appear. That idea has been put aside, but a dozen or more of the additional poems in the volume with "Home" will appear in the new book.

The Poems entitled "Peace and War" and "Bardolph the Hermit" were printed in the school paper called "The Academy", (both of considerable length), will appear in the new volume. A new poem that has never been in print, entitled: "Recognition of Friends in the Future Life" will also appear.

The Author is having this new Book printed, not to sell, but just to gather together all his poetical productions; but to have them to give to his friends who are *worthy*, or who he thinks may care for them; and to a newspaper here and there. He may put a dozen or two of the Book on sale in a bookstore, for any persons who may wish to buy.

RECOGNITION OF FRIENDS IN THE FUTURE LIFE.

The struggle is o'er, her pain has ceased at last.
The loosened spirit lifts on easy wing,
From out the circle of her weeping friends,
Who cling to her frail form, now still in death;
Sobbing their grief that swells from broken hearts.
For a brief space she hovers near, as one
Just risen from his bed, where painful dreams
Had troubled him, rejoicing in release
From the night's load. So she remains in doubt
If sudden health may not have flushed her veins,
And sent new life through all her wasted frame.

Turning, she looks upon her couch, where long
She lay in pain and weakness, and beholds
Herself as she had been in outward form;
And for a moment wonders what it means,
For she is conscious of herself,—is free
To move without restraint of fleshly parts;
And feels the joy of freedom from all pain.

But soon, as poised in easy posture, she
Is wondering what she is and where her place.
She finds herself encircled by a throng
Of gentle beings, who soothe her troubled thoughts,
And proffer aid and guidance in the sphere
So new to her and strange and beautiful,
Expanding wide before her spirit's vision.

The old scenes, dark with earthly mists, evanish,
And friends and loved ones of the former days
Depart; but still are held in memory;
Which holds in most tenacious grasp the things
That in the earthly life gave most delight.

Among the loving beings who around her press,
She looks in vain for some familiar face.
For spirits bear to spirits the form and visage
That in the mortal life on earth they wore.
None of the friends she once had loved, and who
Had passed before her to the upper sphere,
Does she discern.

She turns with anxious face
To those sweet spirits who have been to her
So kind and gracious in her new estate;
And with beseeching look she seems to inquire
How she shall know or come in contact with
Her friends and comrades of the earthly life,
Who through death's gate had passed to Paradise.

Her anxious thought is answered by one filled
Above the rest with tenderness and love;
And who, with sweetness most ineffable, smiles
On her, the new-arrived, and comforts her
With soothing words. For thought spontaneous flows
From soul to soul, in the celestial sphere.
It is not voice, as we on earth perceive it,
The medium using of the pulsing air;
But to the spirit sense it seems like spoken words.

"Sweet spirit, I was once like thee"—began
With pleasing speech the gentle guide; "and felt

Myself a stranger 'mid the beauteous scenes
Of this delightful place; and needed, as thou
Dost now, some one to instruct and guide
Along the pleasant paths of Paradise.

“Now by the gracious will of Him who rules
This most delicious land, our Sovereign Lord,
Who by His death redeemed us from the sin
And vile pollutions of the lower world,
I come to lead and comfort thee, and tell
Of things that still to thee seem very strange.

“And that we may with greater ease hold converse
One with the other, may I know the name
By which thy kindred called thee in the world
From which thou art escaped?” Thus kindly spake
The gentle guide.

To her the new-arrived
Made answer: “Lissa was my name, in that
Old world of clouds and sunshine, happiness
And sorrow intermingled. Love was there—
The sweetest thing in all that blighted region—
A touch of Paradise and God's own life.
And love would coin fond names for its dear objects.
For this 'twas I am Lissa—pet and darling
Of those who gave me back their love for mine.

“But may I ask, kind friend and guide, how long
Since thou arrived in Paradise? And what
Thy name on that far ball, that seems in space
So distant, yet so near in thought, and time
Of journeying hither?

“I an infant was,”
She sweetly answered back, “When God’s good angels
Upbore me to the region of the Blessed.
The name my mother gave me, and the man
Of God repeated at the holy font,
As fell the drops baptismal on my brow,
In name of Father, Son and Holy Ghost,
I knew not. But, as passed the gliding hours—
If hours they may be called where no sun is
To circle through the heavens, and mark the lapse
Of day and night;—and my young spirit grew
In strength of thought and apprehension; then
Some portion of my earthly life was told
To me,—my parentage, and how
It came to pass that I was to this world
Of light and beauty lifted up, before
That sin had flecked with its contamination
My tender spirit. For the inhabitants
Of Paradise receive such knowledge of
The earthly state, as may seem meet and best
For their more perfect service here of Him
Who is their Lord and Savior. For Angels go
And come from Heaven to earth, and earth to Heaven,
Charged to keep faithful watch and ward about
The homes of God’s dear children.

“So at length
Much was revealed to me about my birth,
And my short life on earth, and all the grief
My mother suffered when her first born child
Was taken from her and borne up to Heaven.
And I was told the name, the Christian name,
Bestowed on me in baptism, in His name
Who had redeemed me from the power and curse
Of sin and death and brought me to Himself.”

She ceased. But Lissa still intently stood
In attitude to listen. For the voice
Was sweet, and seemed to charm her very soul,
And bring an echo of the distant past,—
When she had heard an infant's tender tones
Lisp mamma, mamma, to her mother heart;
And felt its little hand caress her cheek
And bosom. Then Lissa softly spoke:

“But, sweetest Guide, the name that thou didst mention,
Bestowed on thee in Holy Baptism, in His name
Who saved us all; canst thou not tell it me?
For something in me seems to prompt the wish
To know thy name, and know thyself more fully.”
To whom the Heaven-taught child of earth
Replied: “The name I bear in Paradise,
But spoken first by my dear Mother's lips
On earth, and sanctified by Holy Rite
In Christ's name, is Romaine.” “Mychild! Mychild!”

Cried Lissa, “'tis thyself. I am thy mother.
At last by God's good hand restored
And thou to me; through all the perils and pains
Of that long life on earth. My own Romaine!
Sweet child of many hopes and longings;
How oft my thoughts have pictured thee among
The Blessed, in this bright world, and wondered when
I should be borne if ever unto this happy place,
And find and know thee as my darling child,—
My lost Romaine! The Lord be praised for all
His infinite love and mercy for us both!”
Awhile they gazed in rapture each on each,
Then clasped in long embrace of perfect love.

Chapter II.

Time is duration, without metes, or mark
Of progress in the world of spirit life.
The light there such as constant flows
From God's ineffable glory, of beauty full,
And full of life. No night is there.
No morn arises and no evening fades,—
Nor moon walks forth in softened light
With silent steps upon her nightly track;
Nor stars peep out.
No thought is taken of the lapse of time.
There is but sense of a continuous now.
Lissa and her beloved child, in bliss
Of sweet communion still remained,
For what on earth would many hours seem,
Talking of all the past in either world,
And praising God for His abounding goodness.
The blessed spirits, passing on their rounds
Of duty or of pleasure, soon perceived
How happy was the child they called Romaine,
With that most gentle spirit latest come
To Paradise. A child she was to them
In form and beauty. For the mind expands of
Those who reach the Heavenly state of bliss
As infants; while they bear the state
Of childish nature, beautiful and pure.
With souls that show no stain of sin; and from
The tendency to evil thought or deed
Made strong and sure through power of Him who gave
His life for the redemption of mankind.

The evil taint, transmitted from the great
First Father of the race, rests in the soul

Of each one human born. The blood of Christ
Cleanses the taint from every infant dying
Ere capability of Faith is in the soul.

Most happy Lissa was in her Romaine,
And near her held her place as if in fear
Lest turning from her she should lose the vision
Of this her precious child, Heaven-bred,
Wished for so long; or some untoward chance
Should sunder them.

In happy converse still they stand, or move
Among the many Holy ones who flit
From place to place on errands of love or duty.
And still they talked of all that had occurred
Since that sad day,—sad truly to the Mother,
O'er fond of this her beautiful first born,
When helpless she must stand and see her babe
Endure the pangs of death, and fade away
From out her sight, or reach of earthly sense.

The tale was long that Lissa had to relate
Of earthly happiness, and all the joys
Of home, mingled with cares and pains and griefs,
Love lightening all the toil and anxious thought
For those who made the home, and for the friends
Or suffering ones who needed help and succor.
She told how sweet it was to bear even pain
And heavy toil, if only loved ones might
Be comforted, and home protected from
The approach of evil; while trust in God and hope
In His abounding grace and goodness were
A never failing source of rest and peace.

“But darling child of mine, did you not know?
Did nothing come to you in all those years
Since you to this blessed region were upborne,
No tidings of those who loved you best on earth,
And grieved that you were gone? Were you not told
By spirits loosed as I have been from shackles
Of flesh, and clogging things of earthly sense,
And carried hither, of those thro’ whom God gave
You being, and watched you tenderly,
And o’er your cradle bent with ceaseless love?”

“I was not kept in utter ignorance,”
The sweet and loving daughter made reply,
“Of what transpired in that old home on earth,
And how they fared who watched my infancy.
I knew that they among the living still
Were found in that far world, and that the light
Of God was on their path; and that ere long
To this delightful Paradise I knew
They would transported be, and I should see
And know them as my dearest friends on earth.

“But what they did and suffered; how life sped
Amid the cares and joys, the loves and hopes,
That were their lot, was not to me made known.
For God in wisdom deems it best that those,
Translated in their tenderest years to Heaven,
Should little know of what the saints redeemed
Call grief and pain, or sin and death,
Endured while on the earth. From these they are
In mercy rescued, and conveyed to this
Bright world of love and peace and holiness.

“Angelic beings, messengers of our King,
Go often to and fro on errands of love—
Ministering spirits sent forth to minister
To those who heirs of His Salvation are.
But we young spirits, earth-born, learning still
The ways and duties of the heavenly state,
Are not commissioned to such lofty service.
We join in songs of joyful praise; and when
The hallelujahs rise to Him who loved
And gave Himself for us, we lift our voices,
And joy to swell the melody that rolls
Through all the arches of the heavenly temple.
We listen to the story told of those
Who thro’ great tribulation came, and who
Had washed their robes and made them white in blood
Of Him who died that they might live and gain
A welcome to His home of peace and rest.

“The ways of God are taught to us, and all
The scheme of His creation is made known,
And mysteries revealed of how God deals
With sinful men. And thus in knowledge we
Advance, and grow in power of apprehension
Of whate’er truth our Lord would have us know.
And as our power of thought expands, we pass
To higher degrees of happiness and life;
And love still more and more pervades our being—
The love of Him who formed us, and His Son
Sent forth to conquer death and sin, and all
The might of Satan, and bring us to Himself,
Redeemed and purified and made immortal.
At length we too shall rise to such degree
Of knowledge and of spiritual strength and wisdom,

That we may serve our King, and do His bidding.
The highest joy of love is service done
For those we love. We now but stand and wait,
Rejoicing in the fullness of the bliss
Our Lord has graciously on us bestowed."

Entranced the mother, Lissa, listening stood,
While her immortal child, so far advanced
Beyond her in such heavenly lore, discoursed;
And wished that she would still talk on incessant.
Silent they lingered, clasped once more in fond
Embrace; then moved with joyful step and light
Among the happy throngs of Paradise.

Chapter III.

"Thirty and six the tale of years, my darling,"
In speech began thus Lissa, "since unseen
The angels came and bore thee from my arms,
And I was left o'erwhelmed in helpless grief.
And yet in all those years, as time on earth
Is reckoned, hast thou seen no one, among
The thronging spirits in this happy place,
Who chanced to know thee as a child of mine?"

"I now do call to mind," Romaine made answer,
"That many years ago, as thou might'st say,
Dear mother, in language of thine earthly life,
My loving teacher spake of one, a man,
Of gentle mien, and earnest, thoughtful face*
Who lately had arrived in Paradise;
Who, passing near me, as with my companions,
I strolled among the groves and o'er the lawns

*Moorhead

Of this delightful region, stopped and stood,
With startled look, when some one spoke my name;
And to him beckoning my guide, he said:

“Just now I heard a name pronounced, as slow
I paced along—a name that years ago
Dear friends of mine bestowed upon a child
God gave them, and then early called away.

“I well remember how the parents mourned
Her loss, and would not be consoled, because
She was not. Then in converse further he
Became convinced that I was that dear child
For whom the parents mourned so bitterly.

“This noble spirit came and talked with me,
And told how frail thou wast, my mother;
That soon, he doubted not, the heavenly ones
Would bear thee also to this happy place.
Thy mother, too, he spoke of, lingering,
In patience, in the midst of pain and weakness,
Upon the border of this Paradise,
And filled with hope that soon release would come.

“He also told of one, a precious boy,*
Snatched suddenly from life—one near to me in blood,
As earthly ties are reckoned—whom he chanced
To meet, astray on the celestial plain,
With many comrades of a kindred age,
Cared for and led by angels hovering near.
This youth, my new friend told me, spoke to him
Of thee, and of his parents and dear friends,
Heart-broken by his sudden death. ‘But would
That I could tell them,’ said the happy boy,
‘The joys of this new sphere of life’ ‘and how
I long to greet them all in this bright world
Of Paradise.”

*Archie Hilton

“My friend who talked with me told not his name,—
Perhaps thou canst divine it, my dear mother.
Ere long he left me, not without a smile
And gracious parting words, and hope expressed
That we should meet again. But 'tis long since;
And in the wide expanse of this large realm
Of Paradise,—stretching on all sides boundless.
For God no limits sets to space; no wall
High reaching has he reared to circumscribe
The wanderings of this happy world of beings;
They go and come, and far as farthest orbs
Excursions make, but still are held and drawn
By the attraction of His love and power.
His energy prevades the universe,
And all who wander come again to Him.

“And thus my new acquaintance, passing on,
Alone or companied by others, has not chanced
To come again where walk the gentle ones
Who bear me company, or meet us where
We go in our swift flights of service to Him
In whom we live and move and find our joy.”
Thus with her mother did the child—the babe
On earth, but now advanced to so great heights
Of knowledge, love and thought in this new world
Of being, hold discourse, while she who gave
Her earthly life, listened in rapt delight.

Then, after pause and quiet rest of thought,
Spake Lissa to the Heaven-taught child in words
Of kind and gentle tone; for she still wore
In Paradise the manner of her life
On earth—her voice the same, her bearing full
Of grace and gentle dignity: “There must

Be many in this happy world," she said,
"Who passed before me from the scenes I knew,
Who rest beneath these bowers of refreshment,
Or stroll along these paths, or join in songs
Of praise and hallelujahs to our King.
'Tis but brief space of what is earthly time
Since she, of whom your new acquaintance spake,
As waiting on the border of Paradise,
Passed over, and I doubt not rests in peace
Within this happy home of the redeemed.
Long did she wait, and long endure the pain
That was her lot—in patience for release,
Still hoping, biding God's good time. And since
I too within this happy world have gained
An entrance, much my thoughts have turned to her,
My mother; and my hope is strong that soon,
As we among these scenes of pleasure stroll,
'Twill be my happy lot to meet and greet her.

On earth she had grown frail, and marks of age
Were on her cheek and brow; but when the robe
Of shriveled flesh that clothed her spirit dropped,
As she to Paradise ascended, dressed
In pristine youth she surely would appear,
And bear the image of the heavenly.
When in such beauteous disguise, how should
I recognize her, though we face to face
Should meet,—unless some holy messenger,
Charged with the care of those from earth redeemed,
Knowing our thoughts and longings, should make
known
The near relation that on earth we held."

She ceased to speak; when an Angel near,
The words of Lissa and her troubled looks
Observing, near her drew and asked her quest,
Or what the care that rested in her heart.
Though cares in earthly sense, there cannot be
In Paradise, but only longings for
Some higher good, or some out-reach of love.
She modestly made answer that she sought
To know if somewhere in this realm of bliss
Her mother rested from the toils of earth,
And if the spot might be made known to her.

Scarce had she spoken when the Holy one
With sudden movement quickly sped away.
Romaine and Lissa stood in silent wonder,
Awaiting his return. The time seemed long,
Even in this state of rest and happiness,
Where discontent comes not, nor wishes are
Immoderate or wrong. Hope is delight,
And wishing only striving after good,
Which God will surely give in His good time.

But soon the messenger, who sped away
On swiftest wing, returns, now gently moving;
And with him one sedate in her demeanor,
And grave in looks—wearing no show of care,
But filled with heavenly calmness and content.
With all the eagerness of filial love,
Lissa upon her gazes; for she sees
It is her mother—changed, but still the same;
And with a kiss of loving recognition
Each other they embrace; while sweet Romaine,
The child they both had deeply loved on earth,
Is fondly folded in the arms of both.

Chapter IV.

A while the comrades of the Heaven-taught child
Withdrew, and left her to the comradeship
Of those who once on earth had mourned her loss
So deeply; but whom in Paradise, with joy
Unspeakable, they find at last restored
In wondrous beauty clothed and heavenly grace.
No mortal heart the pleasure can conceive
That thrilled the being of the elder twain,
But recently from earth's sad scenes delivered,
As here in the "safe harbor of God's saints"
They feel secure—restored, no more to part,
And joined with her, the long lost little one,
So much their senior in the heavenly state.

Events that to the earthly life pertained,
Which pleasure gave, Lissa,
Rehearsed in order in her mother's ears:
But things that were of painful character,
These she refrained to speak of, lest they should,
Even in this happy place, give sense of sorrow.
But for herself, amid these happy seats,
And far removed from storms of earthly life,
Which pleasure gave, Lissa
Rehearsed in order in her mother's ears;
But what would give her pain and grieve her heart,
These she refrained to speak of, lest they should,
Even in this happy place, give sense of sorrow.

But for herself, amid these Heavenly seats,
And far removed from storms of earthly life,—
The griefs and painful crosses she had borne,
Seen in the light of God's good providence,

And by His holy will controlled and guided,
She knows were wise and helpful—working out,
For her who patiently obeyed His will,
A weight of glory far exceeding all
The suffering and care she had endured.

“The pain of body which I bore” said Lissa,
“For many months, seemed hard; and tedious were
The days and nights when helpless on my bed
I lay, and hoped and prayed that God would raise
Me up and give me strength to bear; and say
‘Thy will be done.’ And glancing backward I
Could see His hand in all that I endured
Throughout my mortal life; and in
The many blessings He vouchsafed to grant,
That I then knew as blessings. He was kind
In ways innumerable. And even when,
With my short sight, I thought the discipline hard—
Yet now I see and know full well the end
Of all my sufferings. And here I have as
Comrade, my child immortal. My mother, too,
Patient and faithful throughout her lengthened life.
And former friends are here, and others soon will be,
Within this home of happiness and peace.
I find them all as happy spirits;
Rejoicing in deliverance from earth’s cares,
And toils and pains of earthly life endured.
And triumphing over sin and death; through faith
In Him, the Almighty Lord and Savior of mankind.
And now to the Triune God, the Father,
The Son and the Holy Spirit, be praise,
Honor, and Glory everlasting. Amen!”

FINIS.

POEM OF THE NATIVITY.

'Tis midnight o'er Judea's plains and mountains;
The silent stars of heaven in peace look down.
'Tis midnight o'er Jerusalem's towers and fountains,—
The temple lamp displays its flaming crown.
Northward and southward through the chosen land
Men sleep, and labor rests his weary hand.

Far o'er the land of Moab's dark-hued daughters,
The sky bends down, untinged with Orient light.
The great sea westward pours its restless waters,
Lashing its unseen shores beneath the night.
The world's at rest,—except where far Cathay,
And lands more distant, feel the bright sun's rays.

'Tis midnight! Shepherds hold their watchful station
'Twixt Holy Salem and King David's town,
Guarding their flocks. They see, in rapt elation,
A wondrous company from heaven come down.
A bursting light flames earth and heaven in glory,
As thus the angel tells his brief, glad story:

"Tidings of joy I bring to every nation:—
A Savior, Christ the Lord is born to-day."
The heavenly host in answering jubilation,
Pour forth in rapture, their exultant lay:
"Glory to God on high! on earth be peace;
Good will to men shall evermore increase."

Entranced, the shepherds heard the song immortal;—
No sweeter ever fell on human ears!
They watch the angelic choir to heaven's portal,
And strive, amid their almost mastering fears
To catch once more, the echo of that strain
Of love and peace! Salvation's glad refrain.

Ere yet 'tis dawn, the shepherds, full of wonder;
Their ears still tingling with the heavenly sound;
Forgetful that the thief their fold may plunder,
Or prowling wolves o'erleap the enclosure's bound,
Make haste the tidings glad to bear with joy
To Bethlehem's gate, and see the Heavenly Boy.

On far off Eastern plains, Chaldean sages
Witness the light. A brilliant star it seems;
Foreseen by prophets of the ancient ages,
Lifting o'er Jacob's land its peaceful beams.
Upon the sky it hangs, and moving not,
Marks with its undimmed ray the sacred spot.

Led by the immortal King's imperial token,
The wise men plod their way, a weary band,
O'er deserts wide,—press on with faith unbroken,
Laden with kingly gifts to Israel's land.
Unbalked by cruel Herod's wiles they bring
Their offerings rich before the infant King.

The light, the song, the star—these signs from Heaven,
Amid earth's darkness and the night of sin,
Were tokens of the coming glory given,—
Of the Messiah's kingdom ushered in.
Still spreads the light celestial,—ever still
Is heard the song of peace,—to men good will.

And as when Christ was born, the Empyrean
Was flooded over with a heavenly blaze;
And men were charmed with the angelic paean
Of joy and gladsome song, and highest praise;
We still, at Christmas tide, should tell the story
Of Jesus' birth, and give to God the glory;—

Praying that, while abundant peace and pleasure
Embrace the lives that God in goodness gave,
Our hearts may all receive in fullest measure
The love of Him who came our souls to save.
The bliss He gives can never end in gloom,
But fresher grow with an immortal bloom.

Of peace and kindness spake the herald angel;
For all mankind the blessings that He named.
Shall we not help fulfill the sweet evangel,
And strive to make the Eden be proclaimed?
Let stinging tongues be silent, passions cease,
And all the year become a Christmas time of peace.

A TALE FOR THE CHRISTMAS TIME.

*"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least
of these my brethren, ye have done it unto Me."*

A little girl lay on her couch of pain;
The night was dark and the fierce storm beat
With fury and might thro' street and lane,
Slashing with wings of snow and sleet
The tenement frail where the sufferer lay,
And tossed, and moaned, and longed for the day.

"O sister darling."—for not alone
Little Mabel lay in that cheerless room,
With its one dull lamp, that dimly shone,
Revealing the grimed walls thro' the gloom:
"Did you say that to-morrow was Christmas Day—
That day once joyous with song and play?"

"Come, sister, take my hand in yours;
Sit here on my bed; —so cold, I shiver!
This dreadful storm! how it beats and roars,
Till it makes our hovel rock and quiver!
Let us talk of the happy days that are past,
And forget the cold and the wintry blast.

"Our papa was always good and kind;
And then, when the Christmas time came round,
He'd tell us that Santa Claus kept us in mind;
And we'd lie waking to hear the sound
Of the tinkling bells and the pattering feet
Of his reindeer team as they sped so fleet.

“ 'Twas our dear father and mother, we know,
Who gave us the pretty things Christmas morn.
But nobody cares for us, sister, now,
When hungry, desolate and forlorn.
Dear mamma whispered us when she died:
“Have courage, my children; the Lord will provide.”

“Has God forgotten us, Jennie dear?
And must we shiver, and starve and die
On Christ's own day, with Christians near
Who are singing carols to Him on high—
Praising Him for His boundless love,
And seeking His blessing from above?

“I thought that Christians loved each other,
And if trouble fell to another's lot
Each bore the part of sister or brother;
Thus our dear mother read and taught.
'Whatever ye do to Mine in need,
Ye do to Me,' the Good Lord said!

“O I'm so tired and sick and cold.
Will never the night and storm be past?
No coal you say, nor fagot, nor mold,
To keep us from freezing to death at last?
The lamp is flickering, death is nigh:
Lie close, dear sister, and let us die.”

Hail, Christmas morning! the storm is gone;
In cloudless beauty the sun bursts forth.
In drifts of whiteness, on street and lawn,
The snows lie, swept from the frozen North.
'Gainst Mabel's cottage the storm force wild,
Over windows and door, the snow had piled.

A good Samaritan passed that way.

“What’s this?” he queried. “The last night’s storm
Has buried the cabin from light of day,

But kept the inmates safe and warm.”

He tunneled his way to the door, when lo!

As he entered, two little girls under the snow!

God’s mercy, indeed, their lives to save,

Had made the winds to obey His will;

A coverlet soft and warm they gave

Of the snows insifted slow and still,

And Christmas joy once more is come

To the dear little girls, in the good man’s home.

Let the Christmas time be a time of cheer,

And love and kindness and joy abound;

Be it still remembered that far and near

Are many in poverty hardly bound.

And while we rejoice in Jesus’ birth,

Let us strive with Him to bring “peace on earth.”

WHAT IS POETRY?

Perhaps we may find a satisfactory definition of poetry among the poets themselves. Samuel Taylor Coleridge says: "Poetry is the blossom and fragrance of all human thought, human passions, emotions, language." Edmund C. Stedman quotes Wordsworth as saying that "Poetry is the spontaneous outflow of powerful feelings." And Macaulay, in his "Essay on Milton," says: "By Poetry we mean the art of employing words in such a manner as to produce an illusion of the imagination."

"A solemn murmur in the soul
Tells of the world to be;
As travelers hear the billows roll
Before they reach the sea."

Or this oft-quoted passage from Wordsworth:

"The good die first;
And they whose hearts are dry as summer dust,
Burn to the socket."

Or this from the same poet's "Ode on Intimations of Immortality":

"Hence in a season of calm weather;
Tho' inland far we be,
Our souls have sight of the immortal sea
Which brought us hither;—
Can in a moment travel thither,
And see the children sport upon the shore,
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore."

In a poem by Henry Vaughan, one of the elder English poets, in which he speaks of those who are struggling to make some approach toward the friends taken from them by death, this striking stanza occurs:

“They to the verge have followed what they love,
And on the insuperable threshold stand;
With cherished names its speechless calm reprove,
And stretch in the abyss an ungrasped hand.”

The same poet speaks thus of our Lord’s hallowing the tomb by resting in it, and blessing it when He rose:

“He only with returning footsteps broke
The eternal calm wherewith the tomb is bound;
Among the sleeping dead alone He woke,
And blest with outstretched hands the host
around.”

One more delicious thing I am tempted to quote, which I have carried as a little printed slip in my pocket-book for thirty years or more. It is on “Life,” by Mrs. Barbauld. The poet Rogers liked it greatly; And Madam D’Arblay, it is said, was accustomed to repeat it to herself every night before she went to sleep. And Wordsworth, Crabbe Robinson tells us, was heard, as he paced his room one day, muttering to himself these words,—referring to Mrs. Barbauld’s lines: “I am not in the habit of grudging other people their good things; but I wish I had written those lines,”—The lines are these:

“Life, we’ve been long together,
Thro’ pleasant and thro’ cloudy weather.
’Tis hard to part when friends are dear;
Perhaps ’twill cost a sigh, a tear.

Then steal away,—give little warning,
Say not good night, but in some fairer clime
Bid me good morning!"

Ten thousand such perfect gems in perfect setting lie scattered through the great mass of our poetic literature,—many of them in the obscure pages of half-forgotten authors; or in corners of old newspapers with only initials, or anon. attached.

Can we tell why we are peculiarly moved or delighted with them? A brief examination, I think, would show that it is the thought itself, very simply and naturally expressed, but, of course, almost always rich in metaphor, and in words that appeal to the heart. Throw that sweet little thing of Mrs. Barbauld's into something like the majestic diction that Alexander Pope made so popular in his day, and which has not yet gone quite out of fashion, and we should see how greatly weakened would be the effect upon us.

We might be moved as by some grand pageant, or as if by the sound of the bugle, or the tramp of armed hosts,—an effect that Pope generally produces. As an example of his grand style, take the following brief passage from his version of the Illiad:

"Great Hector saw, and raging at the view,
Pours on the Greeks,—the Trojan troops pursue.
He fires his host with animating cries,
And brings along the furies of the skies.
Mars, stern destroyer, and Bellona dread,
Flame in the front and thunder at their head."

Nearly one-half of all which is not found in the simple but grand story of Homer at all. A single

term, in the original Greek of the poem, "loud-shouting," Pope has expanded into the two lines:

"He fires his host with animating cries,
And brings along the furies of the skies."

Some semblance of the Pope style of diction may be discovered if we throw Mrs. Barbauld's apostrophe to Life, that has just been read, into the English Epic (or ten syllable) measure. Thus:

"Fast friends, sweet life, we long have been together,
Through nights of storm, and days of sunny weather.
The heart-strings strain, and starts the bitter tear,
When they are sundered who have long been dear.
Give little warning, take thee quick away;
And welcome bid where dawns the eternal day."

There are more words, and possibly a more stately movement; but the poetic and moving effect is certainly weakened.

The common words of home and daily life are generally the best vehicles of poetic thought. Some of the finest passages in Gray's famous Elegy, that so linger and sound through our memory like strains of beautiful music, are expressed in the simplest language. What vivid pictures we have in every line and word of this first stanza:

"The curfew tolls the knell of parting day;
The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea;
The plowman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me."

Or this, the very next stanza, is quite as finely descriptive of the objects of nature:

“Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
Or drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds.”

Poetry has done much of its best and greatest service in creating the hymns of the Christian Church. Charles Wesley, it may almost be said, has done as much for the church, since his day, through his sublime and tender, his stirring, heart-searching and worshipful hymns, as half the preachers thro’ their sermons. And nearly or quite as much may be said of Isaac Watts and William Cowper.

And these hymns of theirs are, for the most part, expressed in words so simple, and in a style so clear, that even little children can understand them, and unite in singing them “with the spirit and the understanding also.”

And in times of trouble and affliction, how often have the words of some poet, who could feel intensely, and who had the power to interpret, in simple language the feelings, longings and aspirations of the heart, served to bring both consolation and strength to suffering and heavy-laden souls.

At a time of deep sorrow that fell upon me a few years ago,—I must ask pardon for this personal reference,—a friend sent me a little volume of poems, written by one surely a true poet, who had herself suffered a great affliction. Some of the verses seemed to be simply transcripts of the deep feelings of her own heart,—longings, and anticipations, and picturings of the delights of Paradise, in which her faith enabled her to see her friend who was gone as resting.

I am tempted to give a brief extract from one of the poems entitled "Recompense." Referring to God, she says:

"We know He does not mean
To break the strands reaching between
The here and there.
He does not mean, tho' Heaven be fair,—
To change the spirits entering there,
That they forget
The eyes upraised and wet;
The lips too still for prayer,—
The mute despair.

I do believe that just the same sweet face,
But glorified, is waiting in the place
Where we shall meet, if only I
Am counted worthy in that by and by.
I do believe that God will give a sweet surprise
To tear-stained, saddened eyes;
And that this heaven will be
Most glad, most tided thro' with joy for you
and me,
As we have suffered most."

THE COURT OF DEATH.

Within a cavern vast, where sluggish flows
Oblivion's stream, and dripping rocks enclose
A dismal mist, the king of mortal fate,
Enthroned in might, and robed in gloomy state.
Holds his mysterious Court. Upon his face,
Solemn and calm, the keenest eye can trace
No marks of malice; nor of pity there
Does one soft, yielding lineament appear.
Beneath his feet a youthful form lies low,
Once proud in strength, and flushed with life's full flow.
His supple ministers around him wait,
Or at his bidding fly, with wills elate
For deeds of woe.

On this side ruthless *War*,
With visage stern and vengeful, hies afar,
Pushing his slaughtering way, with crushing tread,
'Mid throngs of maddened men made heaps of dead;
While 'neath the cruel trampings of the strife
Lies crouched the wondering babe and pleading wife.
Before him, *Conflagration*, high in air
Heaving her flaming torches, flings their glare,
Lurid and fitful, on his deathful path,
And rushes fiercely onward, red with wrath.
Behind him, *Pestilence* and *Famine* stalk,
Close-pressing on his heels, and making mock,
With their most hideous faces, grim and gaunt,
Of all the grandeur which he makes his vaunt.
His victim, stricken, bleeding, ghastly lies,
Nor heeds nor hears th' exulting victor's cries.

But not by cruel deeds and carnage dire,
By Famine, Plague, and swift-devouring Fire,
Does Death his fatal power exert alone,
And still the pulse, and force th' expiring groan.
These, eager, ready, fly at his command,
And pour destruction o'er the doomed land.
But other shapes, less fierce, yet strong to kill,
Obsequious stand, and wait to do his will.
Here *Pleasure*, luring goddess, plump and fair,
With witching face, and neck and bosom bare,
Proffers her cup, with love and beauty graced,
And sweetly importunes her guests to taste.
They drink; but as the draught their soul enchants,
The giddy, zoneless girl, *Intemperance*,
With hair unbound, flushed cheeks, and leering eyes,
Impregns with drugs the chalice; and then plies
The half-crazed votary's brain with thoughts of woe,
That drive him to the death he would forego.
Remorse, by horror scourged, cries out—"Too late!"
Covers his face and rushes on his fate.
By fiends pursued, *Delirium Tremens* calls
For help in vain, and shuddering, writhing falls
In hopeless agony; while at his side,
Maddened with shame, the coward *Suicide*
Plucks from his riven heart his gory blade,
Staggers and dies, and flees a frightened shade.
But *Pleasure* still, with sweet, seductive lips,
The sparkling chalice filling, gaily sips;
And *Drunkenness*, her goblet lifting high,
Exults to see her victims reel and die.

But not with War and all his murderous band,
Nor yet with reveling *Pleasure*, hand in hand
Close leagued with mad *Intemperance*, mighty waves
Of ruin spreading, and thick sowing graves

O'er Earth, in all her isles and continents wide,
Is Death, the mighty conqueror, satisfied.
Silent, unmoved he sits—unpitying still
Issues his changeless mandate, "slay and kill,"
To other agents, who but wait to know
Their Sovereign's will, then haste on deeds of woe.

Consumption, soft approaching, with her breath
Sighs gently on her victim sealed for Death.
He loves the vermeil flush that paints her cheek,
Nor dreams that 'tis her presence makes him weak.
Listless he lies; sweet languors o'er him shed,
And dreams of life amuse, till life has fled.
Beside him *Fever* droops, with anguished brow,
And frame relaxed, and head reclining low.
The parted lips, flushed face and anxious stare
The monarch's fatal power and work declare.
Here wretched *Hypochondria* sprawling lies,
With half-averted face and straining eyes,
Frightened by phantasies, a horrid crew,
That still the self-tormented wretch pursue;
While there, the halting prey of *Gout* appears,
And wan *Despair*, with grief too deep for tears.
Far happier he whom *Apoplexy* dread
By one fell blow hurls sudden to the dead.
No pangs he feels, not even deaths' last throes—
While *they* drag out long years of lingering woes.

Such be the courtiers that surround the throne
Of Death, the monarch, and his mastery own.
Each vies with each to inflict the tyrant's doom,
And make the earth a pest-house and a tomb.

But who is this, of calm and reverent mien,
Bent down with years, but with a brow serene,
Who comes before Death's presence stern and cold,
And craves the boon of dying—who so bold?

It is the aged *Christian*, whom sweet *Faith*
Cheers and delivers from the fear of death.
Safe in her Heavenly arms she bears him up,
While joyfully he quaffs the bitter cup.

THE DAUGHTERS OF THE YEAR.

I'm the father of motherless daughters—
 (Thus sings the gray-beard year)—
I'm the father of brotherless daughters twelve,
 And my lofty palace they cheer.
For I live in a palace of splendor;
 Its walls are azure and gold;
Its floors the broad earth and the sea;
 It swings in the ether cold.

My daughters are fair and filial—
 They serve in their turn to me;
They garnish my home with crystal gifts,
 And with products of land and sea.
They feed my myriad retainers,
 Reward them for all their toil;
They give them to lie 'neath the starry dome
 Of my grand and magnificent hall.

My eldest is stern and pallid,
 Her mien is stately and bold;
But she loves my people, and laughs to see
 Them merry when she is cold.
I call her my *January*—

For she opens my palace door;
She walks like a vestal in peaceful white—
And carpets with snow my floor.

My second is like her sister—
Her air more rough and free;
I gave her an unpoetical name,
As rugged and harsh as she.
Her reign was short; and another—
My *March*, with a gentle mien—
Assumed the throne of my royal hall,
And ruled with a sway serene.

In smiles and tears came *April*,
And with her delicate hand
She stripped my floors of their carpet cold,
And invited the breezes bland.
She had scarce withdrawn to her chamber,
When *May*, through the southern gate,
Tripped in, clad gayly in green and flowers,
Like a maid to her bridal elate.
But *June* is the Queen of my daughters—
A peerless beauty is she;
She scattered to all her brilliant gifts,
And smiled on each devotee.
She decked my palace with roses—
Flung verdure and gold from her train:—
With sunny smiles and tears of joy
She cherished the growing grain.

July is languid and lovely,
Warm-passioned—with pouting mouth;
She lazily lounged on her tapestried couch,
And sighed for the gale of the South.

With the perfume of flowers, and warblings
Of birds, she soothed her repose;—
She suffered the reapers to ravage my halls,
And smiled as she sank in a doze.

She slept—and her sister *Augusta*,
A haughty, voluptuous maid,
Became the queen of my court and realm,
And a sceptre of majesty swayed.
Her breath was hot as the simoom—
Her blood beat strong in her veins;—
She painted the palace with gorgeous hues,
And heaped it with golden grains.

A buxom lass is *September*,
Her cheek is dimpled with health;
She romped with the zephyr and sighed with the south,
She smiled at her garnered wealth.
She laughed when she looked at the flowers—
The garlands her sisters had twined;
She filled their places with luscious grapes
And apples of brilliant rind.

October, November, December—
This trio has last made me glad;
October was sometimes sunny and bright,
And sometimes gloomy and sad.
A fickle child was *November*,
And tempest with sunshine would twine;
But cold as her eldest sister had been,
Was *December*—the last of my line.

And now with my motherless daughters—
Queens regent of earth and of air—
With my troop of brotherless sisters twelve,
I am quitting my palace fair.
We have ruled in the fear of Heaven;
We have measured a cycle of time;—
And at last, to our home in eternity's realm,
We pass from our natal clime.

WINTER'S PARTING SONG.

Away, away to my frigid home,
Where the glittering icebergs tower,
No more the fields of the South I'll roam,
Nor scathe its lawns in my power.
I long to fly where the Northern blasts
Flap wings of feathery frost;
Where Night her cloak o'er the white earth casts,
With streaks of the morning crossed.

O'er the dark, cold waves of my Northern sea,
That dash on an ice-bound shore,
I long to skip in my uncurbed glee,
And dance to their music's roar.
'Mid sunny homes have I wandered long,
And scattered my crystal treasurers;
I've marshalled the host of my tempest throng,
And the winds have served my pleasures.

I flung my robe over meadow and hill,
My white, unsullied mantle;
I spread its skirts round forest and mill,
And lapped them soft and gentle.
But the bold-faced sun has opened his eye
On my gifts so white and tender;
I'll gather them up, and away I'll hie
To my palace of crystal splendor.

I sealed the lake with my icy seal,
And locked the stream from its flowing;
I laid my hand on the miller's wheel,
And I stopped the boatman's rowing.
But I'll break my seals and loose my bands,
And free the slaves of my power.
I'll hasten back to my frozen lands,
Where the glittering icebergs tower.

A RAILROAD DISASTER.

[*"The bridge gave way, and the whole train was precipitated into the gulf, a distance of fifty feet. Sixty dead bodies have been taken from the wreck."*—]

W. W. R.

The hour of four approaches. Groups of men,
Upon the platform standing here and there,
Hold idle converse on the current news—
The hundred themes of passing interest that
The minds engage of thoughtless, or, perchance,
Of thoughtful mortals. Here, some sit apart,
Communing silent with their souls; or dreaming

Some lovely dream of home; or building castles
Of future happiness, or wealth, or fame.
With step impatient others walk from point
To point, anxious to hear the signal sharp
That shall announce the moment of departure—
Departure whither? Ah, they know it not!
There sits, with much of patience in her look
And mien, a calm-browed mother. In her lap
An infant sprawls, and chirrups in its glee,
Or, tired and restless, whimpers out its plaint.

And yonder stands the huge and ponderous engine,
As quiet as an Arab's conquered steed—
But strung with might, and with a heart that strains
To burst its pent-up fury forth. The hot
Steam hisses spiteful through its nostrils; while
The engineer, with look of confidence,
Assured that all is safe, leans carelessly
Against the mighty giant's brow, or lays
His arm caressingly upon his back.

But see! The monster moves. He seems to live!
With strong but gentle impulse back he pushes
The train of passive cars. And now they stand
Beside the platform. Fiercely shrill the whistle
Sends forth the startling signal of departure.
The people press with selfish haste within
The cars and drop upon their seats, as though
Each feared there were not room enough for him
And all the rest. Again that piercing shriek
Resounds. A belch of steam and smoke, a quick
Jerk, and a running clanking from end to end—
And slowly the lengthened train moves on its course.

Each moment gives increase of speed, till like
A storm, with rush and roar, 'mid clouds of dust
It flies along with grand and terrible power.

Now suddenly it stops, as though the spirit
That gave such fearful strength and motion were
At once withdrawn. Again it starts—again
It flies, and fiercely flaps its iron wings
Till all the earth doth tremble. On it speeds
As if ten thousand demons gave it chase,
Resolved to drive it down some dreadful gorge,
With all its precious load of life, and love,
And worth, and wealth, and dash and crush them in
Promiscuous ruin. But hark! that steam-shriek sounds
A fearful note! Another, more terrific,
And fiercer! See! an awful chasm yawns!
Madly the engine plunges down the gulf,
Writhing and broken; and the train, with all
Its helpless freight of terrified men and women,
Leaps after. Down they dash an endless depth,
And in a moment sink beneath the waters—
And all is still.

The ruin was complete
As fearful. Three-score souls but heard the shriek
That was their death-knell—heard and knew no more
Until they woke to consciousness among
The habitants that throng the eternal spheres.
A few, who passed through all of death except
The waking beyond the bourne of the unknown,
Were rescued. These rejoice, and thank the God
Of Heaven that they were saved from death.

Who knows

But that the dead rejoice that they were not?

The following poem was written before the breaking out of the "Civil War."

LIFT THE GLORIOUS BANNER.

Ye sons of sires who bravely dared
In Freedom's name to fling
The gauntlet down, and meet the hosts
Of Britain's haughty king—
Arouse your strength! shake off your sloth!
And prove your birthright true!
By the Constitution and Union stand,
And the flag of red, white and blue!

Then lift our glorious Banner high!
Shout, shout as its folds sweep against the
sky!
Seize sword and rifle, and swear you'll be
True Sons of the Heroes of Liberty!

When foreign foes our land assail,
Or traitors treason plot;—
If prosperous days bring wealth and ease,
And even Virtue's bought;
Forget not, but remember still
The price for Freedom paid—
The blood, the treasure, sufferings, tears,
On your country's altar laid.
Then lift our glorious Banner, &c.

United let our country be—
No strifes of State with State;
Let North with South and East with West

Hold friendship strong as fate.
Oh! crush with mighty hand the fiend
Whose tempting words would lure
One State to break the sacred band
That keeps our Union sure.
Then lift our glorious Banner, &c.

Almighty Ruler, God of Truth!
Still guide us by thy grace,
And make this broad and goodly land
A heritage of peace.
Allay all malice, quell all strife,
Exalt the good and true!
Oh God, may not one star be torn
From our flag of red, white and blue!
Then lift our glorious Banner, &c.

THE CHORAL SONG OF THE STARS.

'Twas New Year Eve, the stars were glistening,
And 'neath their gaze a poet was listening.
He thought to hear the song they sing
As through the universe they ring
The story of the closing year,
And all the thoughts and hopes that cheer,
Depress or pain, exalt or thrill,
The thousand million souls that fill
Earth's mighty continents. He heard,
Or seemed to hear, as 'twere had stirred
A spirit's breath among the chords
Of some sweet instrument; and words
Came softly floating and touched his ear
In melodies sweet as the angels hear.

His soul mounts up on celestial wing
And lists to the song that the stars do sing:
Arise, thou beautiful, gladsome Earth!

We chant thee a New Year song;
The delicate chords of a million rays

We strike in a countless throng.
'Tis many a hundred ages since
We looked on thy primal light,
And "sang together" in praise of Him
Who stationed thee in our night.

All hail! thou world of the azure sky;
Of the moonlight's quiet gleam;
Of hill and meadow, and forest and vale,
Of the lake and rippling stream;
Of the winter's floor of marble ice,
And his carpet of downy snows;
Of the anthem grand that the tempest sings
When abroad in his might he goes!

But not for these do we chant thy praise,
Thou star of Heaven's delight;
Though all these beautiful things and forms
Still hallow thee in our sight.
Because thou art the abode of man,
In the image of God create,
Do we strike the harp of the Universe,
And sing of thy high estate.

A mansion of love to him thou art,
A home of delight and joy,
Where simple Content may fold her wing,
And Virtue have sweet employ;—

A look-out point o'er the realms of space,
Whence rational man may scan
The wonders of God's omnipotent power,
And learn his magnificent plan.
And not the meanest of man's delights
Are oft his griefs and sorrows;
They are rosy clouds in an evening sky—
The shadows of brilliant morrows.
And death—it is but the gloomy gate,
Through which earth's myriads pass
To people the empty worlds that lie
Through the realms of infinite space.

Roll on, bright world, in thy grand career!
A million stars look on
From afar, and wonder, and watch thy course,
As they did through ages gone.
Though small thy lamp in the vast concave
Of night's unnumbered hosts,
Thou'rt great in His sight whose eye takes in
Creation's uttermost coasts.

And now as again thou'st filled thy round
Of a billion miles, O Earth,
We take our place in the waltz of worlds
And joyously sing thy birth.
Welcome, thrice welcome again art thou!
To join our heavenly choir,
And mingle thy note of the *lost and saved*
With the tones of the universe' lyre.

[*"The Daughters of the Revolution."*—*This distinguished Order of Patriotic American women, directly descended from parents who bore an active part in the American Revolution, have in this manner united to show filial honor and respect.*]

TO THE MEMORY OF THE SOLDIERS OF THAT FAMOUS CONTEST.

Ye last of all the hero band
Who with our Washington did stand,
And stayed his arm of strong command
 In Freedom's holy strife!
We greet you, venerable sires!
To loftiest notes we strike our lyres;
Our hearts, ablaze with patriot fires,
 Thank Heaven that gave you life.

When battle-thunders shook the ground,
And stern hearts trembled at the sound;
When death on gory fields was found—
 Steadfast ye kept your posts.
Ye fought like men at Bunker Hill,
And felt the patriot ardor thrill
Your inmost soul, and nerve you still
 To meet the oppressor's hosts.

On Monmouth's bloody plain ye stood;
Ye crossed the Delaware's wintry flood;
At Yorktown proved your courage good;—
 Unwavering filled your place
On every well-fought battle-field,

Where comrades' blood their valor sealed;
To deadliest onset ne'er did yield,
Nor ever turned your face.

Hail! honored braves! once more receive
The homage that your sons would give;
And O, a patriot's blessing leave
Before you pass away!
Your number dwindles year by year;
Your steps to Heaven draw ever near;
Your glory grows more bright and clear,
As dawns th' eternal day.

THE PRINCE OF WALES
AT THE
TOMB OF WASHINGTON.

Above the strand where, soft and slow,
The waters of Potomac flow,—
Upon a gentle lift of land,
Where solemn trees majestic stand,
Sole sentinels to guard the spot
Most sacred in a patriot's thought—
A royal cortege silent pass
Along the walks, and through the grass.
They stop,—the heir of England's throne
Bows at the tomb of Washington.

Scarce four-score years since, from that spot,
Might have been heard, as brother fought
With brother, the dread cannon's roar
That echoed up from Yorktown's shore.

Now he who fought that final fight,
And won the victory for the right,
Lies here in simple, grand repose—
His tomb a shrine for friends and foes;
While he whose royal ancestor
Sent forth his myriad troops to war
'Gainst filial and fraternal foes,
Who dared resist unrighteous laws,
Stands reverent, with uncovered head,
In presence of the mighty dead;
Paying, though late, the homage won
From England's throne by Washington.
And when, as monarch on that throne,
Past whose deep-rooted base have flown
The tides and storms of a thousand years,
The crown of British might he wears,
In memory may he hold the hour
When, 'neath that still, sepulchral bower,
He knelt before the mighty name
Of him with more than kingly fame;—
And may the act a hostage prove
Of lasting harmony and love.

THE AMBITIOUS STUDENT'S LONGINGS.

Can Fame be mine? Cannot arise
To me the hues of gorgeous ray,
That glow before the piercing sight
Of those whose memories ne'er decay?
Why feels my soul these struggling thoughts,
If they, unborn, must melt away?

From childhood's playful, nestling hour
My spirit's arms have seemed to wear
A might which yet my soul would lift
Far up the cliffs of fame and bear
It proudly to the haloed top
Of great renown, and leave it there.

No feeling this mere moment-bred,
Which storm, or calm, or moon, or star
Can stir or light to life. It has
A home within me, though from far
Has flown the spark that lit its birth.
'Twill live while God and nature are.
Say you 'tis all a dream? A dream
Then let it be. And yet 'tis sore
To feel a burning, crisping thirst,
When at the very spirit's door
There seems a gem-walled well, whence dews
Fresh dropped from Heaven unceasing pour.

Fill my embrace, whate'er thou art!
Sea-froth—a bubble—empty air!
Though thou shouldst prove all vain—not worth
My spirit's lowest, meanest care—
Fame! I would know thy emptiness—
Thy lightest vanity would share!

PEACE AND WAR.

The morning gleams across the waves that pour
Their ceaseless tide on rough New England's shore;
The winds are lulled, and through the calm profound
No note is heard, except the murmuring sound
From the ten thousand voices of the sea,
Which rise and blend in grandest harmony.
Like white-robed children, trooping down the coast,
Wave chases wave, an endless, countless host;—
Each as it runs lifts up its hands with glee,
And laughs to see the dawn peep o'er the sea.
Thus, from Penobscot's shoals, and Casco Bay,
Where the tall pine its tapering limbs display,
Past Hudson's flood, and Delaware's broader stream,
Through sound, and creek, and cove, they onward teem,
Laughing and leaping, till at length they reach
The furtherest cape of Florida's sandy beach—
Light-footed couriers of the coming sun,
Spreading to South and Westward as they run,
The glorious news, that o'er this Western world
Light, like a banner, soon will be unfurled.
Then, as the morning brightens into day,
Chasing the gloom and mists of night away,
Life wakes again, and soon is heard the roar
Of busy industry along the shore.
The wharves and ships are thronged, and from each
mast
Floats out the flag of freedom on the blast.
The mighty town, erst quiet as the tomb,
Resounds with engine, hammer, car and loom,
And all the implements of work and art
That to the nation wealth and power impart.

And down the coast, from North to Southern strand,
Of great America's unequalled land,
City and rural dwellers all arise
To active life, as gently o'er their eyes
The day-god waves his talismanic wand,
That startles sleep, and breaks his silken band.
And now far inland spreads the wave of light,
Sweeping still back the invading coast of night.
Motion and labor rise upon its crest
As on it rolls triumphant towards the West.
It leaps the Alleghenies' barrier height,
Then presses on resistless in its might.
At length the Mississippi's noble stream,
That takes its spring where pure snow-waters teem
From Northern hills, and empties, far away,
Its swollen flood in Mexico's tepid bay,
It reaches and reveals, from end to end,
The vast array of products that descend
This grandest artery of the nation's might,
Filling each vein of trade with precious freight.
Then flashing on o'er river, wood and plain,
It stops not till it lights Pacific's main.
And thus from Eastern unto Western shore
Of this vast empire, floods of sunlight pour,
Revealing broadly, 'neath the brilliant blaze,
The nation's wealth and grandeur to the gaze.

How blest this great Republic of the West!
Of countries first—of commonwealths the best.
Peace, unity and virtue all unite
With industry and thrift to give it might.
Proud in its independence, forth it flings
Its flag of freedom in the face of kings,
And by that glorious token, broad unfurled,
Gives hope to all oppressed throughout the world.

O Liberty! how happy is thy reign!
And Peace! what blessings follow in thy train!
No monarch, wise and most beneficent,
Could give his realm such quiet and content.

But what is this? What do we see and hear?
Why do men tremble and turn pale with fear?
Why do our streets re-echo with the tread
Of armed men? and whence these pallid dead?
For what the drum's loud beat, the cannon's roar,
And all the unwonted notes of dreadful war?
The morn still dawns upon our Eastern coast—
The waves still run, a merry, hurrying host,
To announce the coming day; but where's the life
That woke in every port to peaceful strife?
And what those sullen ships that rocking lie,
With anchors cast, and bare masts on the sky,
Watching yon silent port with frowning eyes,
Where erst the hum of trade was wont to rise—
What do they there in such a hostile guise?
And see, as bursts the sun o'er yonder plain,
Waving but yesterday with ripening grain,
Two hostile hosts in fearful conflict meet,
And fierce, with bloody death each other greet.
Who are they? Bears not one our Union's flag?
But who are they who madly strive to drag
That glorious ensign down, which never yet
On fair-fought battle-field defeat has met?
Look closer. As the conflict deadlier grows,
Do they not fight like well-matched, equal foes?
Are all Americans—the Sons of Sires
Who fought together—round the same camp-fires
Kept watch in that dark time of strife and blood,
When, strong in right, and confident in God,

The nation, led by matchless Washington,
Hurled back defiance to the British throne?
O can it be, while one of that brave race
Still walks the earth, his venerable face
All seamed with battle-scars, a traitor heart
Would dare to act a parricidal part—
Let passion grow to hatred—hate to strife—
Then lift his hand against his country's life?

And yet 'tis done! War rages through the land:
A host of traitors take their desperate stand
To o'erthrow the government our fathers made,
And rear their unholy fabric in its stead.

And now, for songs of peace, are sounds of war.
To arms! to arms! re-echoes near and far.
A million patriots hear the thrilling cry,
And to their country's rescue nobly fly,—
Resolved to save it, by the help of God,
Or consecrate its ruin with their blood.
From quiet village, and from college green;
From crowded streets amid the city's din;
From roaring mills—from many a peaceful home,
With ardent hearts the willing warriors come.
Along each road the burnished bayonets gleam;
They bristle on the banks of every stream;
And thickly thronging every rushing car,
Are men who bear the implements of war.
Through all the land, from East to Western coast,
From Northern Lakes to where the traitorous host
Against the Union have unsheathed the blade,
The sons of Freedom haste to bring their aid.
Then comes the moment of the battle-shock,
When death and carnage o'er the red field stalk,
And gather in the harvest of the slain,
As reapers horde the sheaves of yellow grain.

Thousands are fallen, and a piercing wail
From stricken hearts is wafted on the gale.
A thousand homes are desolate and gloom
Gathers around them from the open tomb.

Hard by the winding Tennessee's clear flood
Behold a fearful carnival of blood.
The embattled hosts rush to the conflict dire,
Impelled by traitor hate, or patriot fire.
The hardy, fearless, free sons of the West,
Brave as the bravest, earnest as the best,
Confront the exultant legions of the foe,
And hurl them back with many a valiant blow.
Anon the battle turns—onward once more,
The recreant, perjured hosts of treason pour.
The belching guns with thundering peals resound,
And crashing storms of iron sweep the ground.
The ranks are thinned, the ranks close up again,
And death's wide gaps are filled with living men.
O'er all the field, where rolled the battle's flood,
Thousands lie dead, or welter in their blood.
The conflict ceases—for the day is done,
And still the victory's neither lost nor won.

But see, in the dim twilight issuing forth,
A bannered host comes sweeping from the North;
The Union's glorious ensign 'tis they bear,
To aid their brethren in the faltering war.
With bugle blast and sound of fife and drum,
And shouts and loud huzzas, they onward come.
Th' augmented host attack the unwary foe,
And sweep his stunned battalions as they go.
Unflinching, on they press, these noble men,
And drive the traitor's to their swamps again.

And yonder, 'mid Virginian brakes and fells,
The surging tide of battle ebbs and swells.

Gathering from far and near, they fiercely roll
Their concentrated mass to reach the goal
Of victory, and crush the noble band,
Who for the Union hold there their fearless stand.
With fierce and desperate energy they pour forth
To break the Union, and o'errun the North.
Again a host of willing patriots stand,
And breast the wave of death to save the land.
Thousands of precious lives are freely given,
And homes and hopes are gloomed, and fond hearts
riven.

But treason's tide is stemmed, and back once more,
Discomforted and balked its legions pour.

But still the conflict rolled its bloody waves,
And swept our loved ones into ready graves.
Bravely the people bore the dreadful fate,
Resolved, come life, come death, to save the state.
A hundred battle-fields attest the worth,
At which they prized the Union and a Freeman's birth

Behold the picture! Let us take our stand
Like Israel's chief of old, and view the land.
A panorama, glorious to behold,
And varied as 'tis fair, begins t' unfold.
From East to West, a thousand leagues or more,
From North to South along each Ocean's shore,
Through every clime, where every product grows,
To torrid heats from Minnesotian snows,
The ample boundaries of this chosen land,
Hope of the millions long oppressed, expand.
Ten thousand homes the pleasant valleys fill,
Dot the broad plain, or hang upon the hill,—
A centre each of plenty and content—
Redundant with the blessings Heaven has sent.
Nestling among these homes, the school house see,

That beacon-light and fortress of the free—
Rearing defence 'gainst ignorance, worst of foes;
Diffusing truth, the light that *always* glows.
'Mid marts of trade, or on the village green,
In quiet country nook the church is seen,
With open door and Heavenward-pointing spire,
That tell of duty here—of rest up higher.
Behold, afar and near, the panting train,
Leaping each stream, and coursing every plain,
Bearing from point to point, o'er all the land,
The products Art and taste and life demand;
While every river swarms with busy life,
And Commerce urges on its bloodless strife.
No element of strength and vast increase
Seems wanting to this vast empire of peace.
Abundance reigns from cold to burning zone,
And every man can call some spot his own.
No fear comes nigh his door, no tyrant's power
Compels him to rebel, or meanly cower.
The people, their own masters, know no laws
That flow not from their wills, the primal cause.
A kindly government controls the State:
They know its blessings, yet feel not its weight.
Exactions are unknown; no tithes they pay
T' uphold a faith their hearts cannot obey.
Or even in that dark hour of anguish deep—
An hour that often brings the desperate leap—
When honorable ambition's cup was dashed
From *worthy* lips—think you that then there flashed
Through *his* pure soul—the noblest of them all—
One thought of yielding to the tempter's call,
And dragging down his country to her fall?
No, No! He loved his country all too well
To barter her for power, or vengeance fell.

To leave her heaven to rule in treason's hell!
His failing powers and latest breath he gave
To save her from a suicidal grave.

But not alone the giants of the past
Opposed the hosts of treason to the last.
See Johnson, Brownlow, nobly take their stand,
And hundreds more, a brave, heroic band,
Who suffered all things, every wrong withstood
And made resistance even unto blood.
Each loved the noble State that gave him birth,
And thought his home the loveliest place on earth.
Possessions, habits, friendships bound them fast
To the sweet spot in which their lot was cast.
But they were *patriots*, and loved the name
Their country bore, and gloried in her fame.
They loved her Freedom, loved her equal rights,
And prized the Constitution that unites
Her many States in one, and guaranties
To all protection and their liberties.
For her they could risk all, even home and life,
And stand untrembling in the deadly strife—
Meet treason in its fiercest mood, and cry
“Long float the flag of Freedom on the sky!”

Richer our country far with such men's graves,
Than in the labor of ten million slaves!

PEACE AND WAR.

THE FALSE AND THE TRUE.

Were there not thousands, even in times of peace,
Whose faithless hearts gave treason welcome place—
And who, through anxious years, did patient wait,
And *plot* and *plan* the ruin of the State?
Did they not *hate* this government of the free,
And hate the very name of liberty?
Could it be *Slavery* that did all this?
Or *made not traitors Slavery what it is*,
And *used* it to maintain their wonted power,
Or break the Union at the appointed hour?
Did not the leading rebel of them all,
When strong-willed Jackson let his great fist fall
Upon their petty treasonable plot
And scarce could keep its grip from off their throat,—
Did not the prince of traitors, forced to yield,
And draw his faithful minions from the field,
Declare, that, though an odious law did fail
To breed rebellion, a cause that would avail
Was just at hand—the cause of *servile right*:
On this his followers could renew the fight.
Not that for Slavery's self they cared a straw;
For it was safe, beyond the reach of law.
But they must have a base whereon to build
Their treasonable schemes, and this would yield
The very ground they wished for, and with meet
Manipulation, treason make complete.

The burning lava pouring down amain,
Spreads devastation o'er the subject plain;
But from the deep volcano's seething maw
The fiery floods their fierce destruction draw.

All nature shudders at the thunder shock;
But 'tis the lightning deals the deadly stroke.
So slavery may *seem* to be the *cause*
Of this foul treason, and contempt of laws:
But 'tis because free government they hate
That traitors strive to overturn 'the State.
The tree is rotten, and depraved the root;
And slavery is but the evil fruit.

But in the midst of traitors stood a few
Who to the *Union* bore allegiance true.
An ardent love of country warmed their hearts,
A love that reached not one but all the parts.
Behold a Clay, a Jackson, Taylor, Scott—
Think you that e'er a treasonable thought
Their souls polluted, as they nobly stood,
And pled or battled for their country's good?
In senate chamber, or on bloody field—
In chair of State or when, admiring, kneeled
Legions of friends to offer power and place—
The well known end of a political race.
Though no nerve quivers, and no faces blanch,
Valor cannot withstand the avalanche.
Firmly they meet the shock; but, forced to yield
To overwhelming numbers, quit the field:
With banners flying, faces toward the foe,
And hearts undaunted, battling still, they go.
On Malvern Hill they stand;—with all their power
A storm they hurl that makes the traitors cower.
Broken and foiled, their legions quit the fight,
And seek their stronghold shorn of half their might.

PEACE ANTICIPATED.

When all the sounds of cruel strife are o'er,
And tidings of the carnage come no more;
When onward, from the battle cloud and rack,
We see the light of peace illumine our track,
While still above us floats our flag of glory,
That waved o'er many a field, all torn and gory—
Now bright in full refulgence, not one star
Dashed from its heaven of blue, its folds to mar,
O let us not forget the fearful cost
At which was gained the Union we had lost;
And swear, by all the blood so freely given—
By the ten thousand hearts so sorely riven—
In Justice, Truth, and Honor to *maintain*
This Government of Freedom, won again!

Behold afar the glory of that day
When war, with all its ills, is swept away;
When, as the evil, so the cause is gone,
And Peace and Freedom rest on Right alone.
Then all the land, from East to Western shore,
From Northern hills that hear Atlantic's roar
To where the Rio Grande's water's pour,
Shall own one generous sway of equal laws,
The weak to shelter, aid the poor man's cause,
Deliver the oppressed, the lowly raise—
Make "equal rights" more than a sounding phrase.
Then will democracy—the *People's power*—
Bought by our father's blood, a noble dower—
Gain full development, and be no more
Merely a thing for Knaves to squabble o'er.
Then public virtue will return again,
And posts of trust be filled by honest men.

Prosperity once more will bless the land
With all that use and luxury demand.
From each rich drop of blood by patriot shed;
From every spot where lie the patriot dead—
Bright-blooming blessings will luxuriant grow,
Bathed with the sweetest dews Heaven can bestow.
The nation, steeped in tears, and sore with grief,
Looking to Heaven for counsel and relief—
Made pure and patient by the fires of war—
Enured in youth a cruel yoke to wear;
Redeemed from avarice and presumtuous pride,
And filled with love of country unalloyed—
Will start a new career of grand renown,
Which nobler deeds and brighter hopes will crown.
The old-world leaven of privilege and class
Eliminated closer from the mass;
The power of serfdom broken or destroyed;
The very *name* of slave made null and void;
Freedom of speech and press made sure to all,
While mobs and threats of death no more appall;
The ballot free, and laws both sure and strong—
Impregnable defences against wrong—
All these deliverances, of holiest worth,
Will bless the nation at its second birth.
And then the strides, the giant leaps of trade,
Striving to gain the race so long delayed;
Science and skill and labor all united
To build again the glories war had blighted;
The forests felled, converted every rood
To peaceful homes, and all the land subdued;—
But why go on!—the States increase, expand
Westward and South and North o'er all the land,
Owning no limit save the salt-sea strand.
Millions on millions told the prairies fill,

Throng every valley, cover every hill—
Swarm all the rivers, girt the lakes and main,
And make one mighty nation free and grand again.

FINIS.

BARDOLPH THE HERMIT.

Part I.

“How strange is this! Can it be still the earth
I tread? or one of those celestial spheres,
Which, seen from earth, once glimmered on the blue
Of heaven’s o’erspreading tent? But yonder shines
The sun—his orb the same—his ray as fierce
And dazzling. Yonder, too, just risen, mounts
The moon, a film of mottled paleness on
The sky,—a half-formed circlet, scarcely seen
Amid the burning glories of her lord.
And there! the brook that, when a boy, I played
Beside! The meadow, too, through which it wound.
The very pebbly shallows where it crossed
The lane, where, wading, my feet I bathed
In its delicious coolness.

“What can be

Yon far blue belt that seems to hem this sphere
To Heaven? ’Tis the sea, the glorious sea;
The beautiful, unchanging sea—God’s own
Eternal mirror!—This must be the earth.
And yet how wonderfully changed is all around.
Sun, moon, mead, brook and sea, indeed, are all

Just as when last I saw them on the eve
I shut myself within my secret cave
And that strange slumber fell upon my senses—
So strange and sweet and wonderful—and short,
It surely must have been. But yesternight
It was I fell asleep, it seems to me;
And yet the sleeper takes no note of time.
A minute and an age to him are one.
The earth about me seems so strange and new
So like a garden; not a spot of roughness;
No stones or briers seen; but in their stead
Are flowers and fruits, and seas of grass and grain.
Can it then be my sleep has been no night's
Or minute's length, but for an age of years?

“I'll go to yonder city (though 'twas surely
No city, but a straggling village when
I fell asleep last night—last year—an age
ago—or when was 't? How my poor brain reels!)
—I'll straightway go to where yon mighty forest
Of turrets and pinnacles sweeps against the heavens,
And ask how this came to pass and when,
—If really 'tis not all a fantasy.
But now that I've withdrawn from out my wild,
Secluded cave of rocks, which seems alone
To have remained untouched, I fear to go
Upon the crowded road. I'll skirt these fields,
And shun the gaze of curious people who
Might be amazed to see me in this much
Dilapidated garb—with hair so long
It reaches to my knees! and white! Had I
White hair? My nails, too, like the eagles claws!”

Thus, in soliloquy, Bardolph the hermit
Gave utterance to his much-bewildered thoughts
And new-waked feelings. His emotions were

Such as we may imagine those of a soul
Just past th' impalpable boundary that divides
Earth from the spirit land. He seemed to live
The same, and think and feel just as before;
But all that he beheld put on sò new
An aspect, that he almost doubted his own
Identity, and wondered at himself.
Reaching a pool, he gazed upon the image
Which there he saw reflected, scarce believing
The haggard, hirsute face his own; then washing,
And with his fingers combed his beard and hair.
In sorry plight, and hurrying fast, with face
Downcast, at hobbling gait, he came at length
Among the habitations where the country
Is transformed to city. Each of these
To him appeared a palace of delight.

On all sides gardens, lawns and groves spread out,
Traversed by winding walks, bedewed and cooled
By ever-showering fountains. People stared
Upon him as he passed, or fled as from
A fiendish apparition. On he went,
Gazing, with furtive glance, on scenes unique
And beautiful, that crowded still upon
His vision, till within the teeming city
His trembling feet had borne him. Scarce a spot
Familiar to his former eyes he saw.
Vast structures towered, in adamantine strength,
On every side, of architecture grand
Yet simple—beautiful like mountain piles.
No long extending lines of uniform,
Unsightly walls, hiding the light of heaven,
And streaking the earth with narrow prison alleys,
In which men walk, and dream that they are free,

Marked out the lanes through which with effort he
Might press his way, amid a jostling throng;
But wide and spacious avenues before
Him stretched, bordered on either side with trees
Luxuriant, in richest verdure dressed,
Embowering peaceful mansions, or o'ershading
The lofty homes where industry abode,
Or trade and traffic held their busy court.
Each structure stood alone, and crowded not
Upon its neighbor. And but for the flood,
The constant human stream that poured along
The streets, passing on foot, or swiftly borne
In vehicles of curious shape that seemed
To move spontaneous without jar or noise,
Or visible propulsion, Bardolph would
Have thought that he had not yet reached the city,
But wandered still in some rich rural place,
Where plenty dwelt, and wealth had set its home.
Or by the pity which my face bespeaks,
Obtain admission, and receive the help
And shelter that I need. For hunger makes
Me faint, and this day's long and weary walk
Has given me need of rest."

The place where stood
This ancient building, was retired and quite
Upon the border of the city. There
A sombre relic of the past it was
Whose gloom and dread associations gave
Repulse to every venturous attempt
To plant a cheerful home, or found some work
Of industry beneath its sunless frown.
The teeming crowd was far away, its roar
Subdued to a faint murmur; and but few
Passed by to see the aged, tottering man

As he stood gazing on this only sight
That through the tedious day had brought him joy.

BARDOLPH THE HERMIT;

(Or a Hundred Years Hence.)

Part II.

The man's strange garb and mien, and gait
Shuffling and scared, astonished for a moment
Those who beheld him. But it was as when
One looks upon a shooting star. He turns
To call a friend's attention, and 'tis gone.
So Bardolph was but seen by one and then
Another in the throng—just seen, giving
Surprise and wonder, and was lost to view.
Onward he pressed, alone amid the crowd,
And, as a child, that, straying from its home
To chase the bright-winged butterfly around
The corner, still keeps tripping on in glee,
Until the light, deceptive, fluttering thing
Has flown from sight, begins at length to turn
And weep, and feel that it is lost; so he,
Long struggling on—in quest of what he knew not—
Began to feel deserted and forlorn.
Though twice ten thousand ears, were he in need,
Could hear his call. For many an hour he urged
His lonely way, of all the thousand faces
On which he dared to gaze, finding not one
Whose lineaments brought to mind a single friend
Of all the comrades whom he knew so well—

But yesterday, it seemed.

At length the sun
Began to roll his car adown the slope
Of heaven, to where the ridge of earth invades
The sky; and backward threw his milder beam,
Laden with benedictions soft of heat
And brilliance, spreading a downy whiteness on
The bending blue, and painting monstrous lengths
Of shade upon his earthy canvass broad.
Bardolph beheld the signs of coming eve;
And first bethought him to retrace his steps,
And seek again his cave. But whither go?
And how trace back the labyrinthine clue
That led to his abode? He stood a moment
In deep bewilderment; nor dared advance;
Nor yet to turn his face; when looking toward
The shadowed side of the avenue, he saw
A huge and thick-walled granite pile, embrowned
And mossy, bearing evident marks of all
The storms that centuries had poured upon
Its unmoved bulk. Like some old oak, rough-limbed
And dead at top, that like a patriarch stands
Among ten thousand trees of younger growth,
Fresh, vigorous, and crowned with leafy tufts:
So reared this pile its dark and massive walls,
And braved its crumbling towers and battlements
Against the heavens—a structure lone and solemn,
And grand with unread records of the past.
Upon it gazed the hermit, while memory, slow
And hesitating, led him back, pushing
Her way among a myriad mingled scenes
That crowded on her path; till suddenly
His mind, as at a bound, reached the conviction
That he had seen this building when a boy,

And it was called a prison—a strong-hold
Where men who had committed crime were kept,
And close restrained in gloomy cells.
He shuddered at its awful aspect dread;
And yet was joyed to find at last even one
Familiar object, gloomy though it were,
Within this city of magnificence,
Where he so long had wandered, knowing nought,
And still unknown. “If it be yet a prison,”
He thought, or said to himself in whispered voice,
“Perhaps I may, by plea of vagrancy,
Find refuge within its walls.

BARDOLPH THE HERMIT

(Or a Hundred Years Hence.)

Part III.

As Bardolph stood before the massive pile,
And gazed intent, behold a light appeared
Within a grated window; for the night
Was closing fast around him. He essayed
To gain admittance. Long his efforts were
In vain. The solid iron door gave back
But a dull answer to his thumpings hard,
And he was turning in despair away
To seek a lodging in the street, when lo!
As if by chance—for he had not been heard—
The door was opened! The recluse, who lived
Alone within the melancholy place,
Compelled by nature's needs, was issuing forth
In quest of food. Surprised he saw a wild

And haggard figure at his door, more lean
And hungry-looking even than himself.

Bardolph essayed to speak, and crave admittance;
The sounds he uttered were not real words.
They wore the semblance of articulate speech,
And, *he* thought, bore the meaning he designed
To express; but, like the prattlings of a child,
They failed to tell the thoughts his mind conceived.
And when the other spoke, and asked what need
Had brought the wanderer there, his tones fell strange
On Bardolph's ear. It seemed a foreign tongue,
With only now and then a sound of what
To him appeared his native speech. But moved
By most intense desire to tell his wants,
And gain admission; in a moment he felt
The clearing up of that bright tablet, long
Unused, where memory, many years ago,
Had plainly writ the thrice ten thousands words
And meanings of his mother tongue. At once,
As when the lightning's vivid, burning flame
Lights up the myriad objects o'er a plain
Outstretched, but just now steeped in thickest night,
Flinging them out in a most startling brilliance;
The garnered treasures of his verbal stores,
So long unthought of and unused, now touched
By a flash of the immortal soul, beamed forth,
And lay out free and open to his tongue.

"Kind friend," Bardolph in humble tone began
—"If one in such a mien and garb may call
Thee friend—I stand a helpless suppliant at
Thy door. Through this vast city I have wandered
Since early morn, the gaze of curious

Ten thousand eyes. No friendly face among
The vast and constant-streaming multitude
I've seen, and to no stranger have I dared
To speak, and ask for sustenance and succor.
And now the night is on me; hunger gnaws;
And weariness hangs on me like a load.
A shelter and a morsel is all I crave."

" 'Tis rare," the man replied—a figure scarce
Less wild and outre than Bardolph's he wore—
"For any to approach this door, or seek
For entrance. Outcast from mankind, I keep
A solitary lodgment here, by sufferance.
Few know a mortal lives within these walls;
And these, though much inclined to do me good,
At my most earnest wish molest me not.
The pile is called a monument of ages
Wicked and dark; for this allowed to stand,
A link with that dread past. And I myself
Am but a relic also of that past,
The sole survivor of an age and race
As different from this as Tartarus
From Eden. But come in. Such as I have
I'll freely give thee of."

The hermit stood
A moment silent, struck with a strange dread
At thought of entering this awful place,
So dark and still and solemn, like the tomb.
But nature's needs were pressing; in he passed,
The ghostly keeper leading on before.
Through damp and musty passages they go,
The solid walls resounding to their tread
With a dull, lifeless echo. But at last
They reach a narrow chamber, once a cell,
Where hopeless prisoners had pined, and waited

The doom of the slow-moving law. The walls
Were scored with many names, and cut with words
Of hope or of despair. The chamber lay
Far distant from the street, and to it no noise
Of passing car, or sound of human voices
Could penetrate. One window lone looked forth
Upon a darkened court, where no bright ray
Of sunshine ever fell. The room was scant
Of furniture;—a bed, a bench, a chair,
A few old books, a slowly ticking clock,
Supplied the needs of him who here had lived
For many a year. The wanderer entered, glad
To find retreat so quiet, glad to escape
The din and bustle of the busy streets,
That like a roaring storm had round him whirled
Through all the day. The keeper of the place,
With ready will, set forth his scanty store
Of food; and while Bardolph, with relish keen,
His appetite appeased, his friend went forth
The errand to complete he had essayed
When Bardolph met him. Quickly he returned,
And in due time, without reserve or fear,
They fell to friendly converse on the past.

FINIS.

THE OLD BACHELOR.

On the shadiest side of a dingy street,
In a house that wasn't remarkably neat,
A bachelor kept his hall.
When a younger man, he once had bought
A cottage embowered in vines, and thought
That haply at length 'twould fall to his lot
A wife to his home to call.

But that was many a year ago,
Before he had dreamed a wig to don,
Or live in a hall so small.
For his present abode is not very big—
Too small for a horse, too large for a pig;
He was neither of these, for he wore a wig,
And had neither a trough nor stall.

This bachelor lived in a bachelor way—
A way neither festive nor gay, I may say—
Up stairs on the second floor.
If you saw this floor upstairs, you would stare,
And wonder if anything human lived there,
Humanely hoping it might be a bear,
As soon as you opened the door.

A carpet once covered the floor, it would seem,
But the seams were ripped, and you'd scarcely dream
'Twas so wholly covered with holes,
That even a bachelor ever would think,
Though of bachelors he were the very pink,
Or of men and apes the connecting link,
That a carpet was under his soles.

A bench the bachelor had for his bed,
A pillow of hen's feathers propped his head,
A wooden one served his feet.
A chair there was and an eight-day clock
He'd bought at the sale of a bankrupt's stock
Some years before, while a butcher's block
Was the table from which he ate.

He kept a parrot, and senseless Poll
Could gabble some gibberish—that was all
The talk he enjoyed in his home.
A cat—a kind of a Maltese thing,
To which his affections seemed to cling—
In a feline way would sing for this sing-
Gular man, nor from him roam.

On a swinging shelf were a few old books,
As musty and brown as himself in looks,—
For the man had a turn intellectual.
Stories of love he would never read,
But swallow divorce trials down with greed;
And prove that of woman there was no need,
By arguments most effectual.

But at length this bachelor man fell sick,
And pangs came upon him fast and thick,
And he could but moan and grieve.
A bachelor doctor came to look;
He felt of his pulse, and his head he shook;
'Twas a bitter dose that the poor man took—
And the doctor took his leave.

The kind old mother came to his hall—
For the man had a mother, as almost all
 Men have some time or other;—
And with her came a sweet-faced girl,
Modest and lovely, a very pearl
Of beauty and grace. To the suffering churl
 She passed as niece of his mother.

At first the bachelor turned his head,
And groaned and muttered, "he'd rather be dead
 Than the scandalous sight endure."
But love is mighty;—his mother's gaze,
Her kindly words and gentle ways,
Recalled to his thoughts the happy days
 When his heart was young and pure.

By gentle degrees the bachelor's hall
Was deftly changed, and carpet and all
 Gave place to handsomer things.
He silently yielded up control
While female influence softly stole
Upon his spirit, and charmed his soul
 Till he thought he heard angels' wings.

'Twas only the sound of the rustling dress
Of the gentle maid, in her loveliness,
 As she flitted about the room.
The man got well. He resolved to furl
His banner of hatred to woman and girl;
To leave his den, and take this pearl
 Of beauty and grace to his home.

Thus ends the tale of the bachelor man
Who tried the un-Adam-like, singular plan
Of living an Eve-less life.
He proved to himself that it is not good
For a man to yield to a selfish mood
And spend his days in bachelorhood,
But take Heaven's gift—a wife.

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